

since the keying is prerecorded into the prerecorded foreground signal. Such prerecorded, prekeyed signals have numerous potential applications of which those discussed above are merely exemplary.

I claim:

1. A system for video production, comprising a source of prerecorded video and audio signals from a prerecorded storage medium, a source of user supplied video and audio signals, a video and audio mixer for combining the prerecorded and user supplied signals to provide combined video and audio outputs, a production monitor connected to the mixer to display to the user the mixed signals, and a storage or reproduction device receiving a mixed video signal output from the mixer, wherein the prerecorded video signals from the prerecorded storage medium have a video signal content prekeyed with a keying signal to indicate areas within the prerecorded video signal to be replaced by the user supplied video signals, the mixer being operative to recognize the keying signal and substitute the user supplied video signal for those portions of said prerecorded video including said keying signal, and the mixer being operative to convert signals from the prompting channel into production control signals.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein the control signals include user prompts displayed on the production monitor but absent from the combined video output.

3. A recording medium carrying a prerecorded video signal, prekeyed to define background of images defined by said video signal, which video signal, on playback by a user of the recording medium in apparatus configured to recognize the prekeyed background areas, will generate a signal into which may be inserted, at least in those background areas, a local signal provided by the user.

4. A recording medium according to claim 3, wherein the video signal prerecorded on the medium is predistorted by enhancing the brightness of at least the lowlights of the prerecorded signal outside said background areas while maintaining the background areas at or below black level.

5. A recording medium according to claim 3, wherein the recording medium further carries at least one audio channel, and at least one prompting channel including data translatable into instructions for control of the user provided video signal.

6. A recording medium according to claim 3, wherein the data in the prompting channel is translatable into video data optionally overlayable on video data from said video channel.

7. A system for generating video signals comprising prerecorded video signals overlaid on user provided video signals, comprising a recording medium carrying a prerecorded video signal, prekeyed to define background of images defined by said video signal, which video signal, on playback by a user of the recording medium in apparatus configured to recognize the prekeyed background areas, will generate a signal into which may be inserted, at least in those background areas, a local signal provided by the user, the video signal prerecorded on the medium being predistorted by enhancing the brightness of at least the lowlights of the prerecorded signal outside said background areas while maintaining the background areas at or below black level, and a mixer receiving video signals generated by playback of video signals from said recording medium and video signals from a user provided source, the mixer including means for enhancing the brightness of at least the lowlights of the user provided signal to a similar degree as the lowlight enhancement of the prerecorded signal, and a luminance keyer receiving said prerecorded signal and said lowlight enhanced user provided signal to produce an overlaid video signal in which the user signal is overlaid on the keyed portions of the prerecorded signal, and means for restoring the lowlights of the overlaid video signal to their original levels to provide an output signal.

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